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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PRODUCTION AND MARKETING ADMINISTRATION
FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMS BRANCHMONTHLY FOOD SUPPLY REPORT -- JANUARY 1946

The over-all food supply situation indicated by the January survey of the adequacy of food supplies reflects a continuation of heavy consumer demand. Although many foods have become available in relatively large quantities as a result of continued heavy production and decreased noncivilian requirements, the demand is so large that supplies are readily absorbed when they become available. A portion of the demand--possibly over one-quarter--is not being met at the present time. This accounts for the persistence of a large number of "scarce" reports for many of the items covered by this survey. Since production of many of these items will not increase seasonally until next spring or summer, it can be expected that local shortages of some foods will continue for the next few months unless civilian demand should drop off significantly.

The 210 reports as summarized in this analysis are based on information gathered by field representatives during the first week of January at meetings of food advisory committees and by direct contacts with the food trade. The reports were distributed among the five regions as follows: Northeast 28, Midwest 64, South 43, Southwest 40, and West 35.

The analysis, as in the past, is divided into three parts. Part I gives a narrative summary of the month's developments. Part II gives percentage figures for each region, dividing commodities into three groups: generally scarce, generally adequate, and unbalanced. It must be remembered that these percentages are based on the number of areas reporting the situation rather than on quantitative measures. Furthermore, each area report is given equal weight in computing the regional and U. S. totals. Thus, shortage situations or differences among regions may be exaggerated. Part III shows the food situation in 30 selected localities.

The three categories of adequacy of supplies used in this survey are defined as follows:

Scarce: Supply is less than three-quarters of current demand.

Adequate: Supply more than three-quarters of current demand but not sufficiently in excess of such demand to cause excessive inventories.

Surplus: Able to obtain supplies in quantities greater than demand. Inventories heavy and rapidly becoming excessive in view of current level of demand.

PART I - ADEQUACY OF FOOD SUPPLIES

Fruits and Vegetables

Canned fruits: Little change has taken place recently in the over-all tight supply situation for the major canned fruits. While distribution into retail channels appears to be good and civilian supplies for the pack year are at a relatively high level, consumer demand is very great and supplies are absorbed as soon as they are made available. This situation may be expected to continue for some time. During the past month a slight improvement was registered for peaches, but there was a corresponding decline in supplies of fruit cocktail.

Canned juices: All citrus juices continued readily available in all parts of the country, with a few areas reporting surpluses that had not previously existed and a few shortage areas moving into the "adequate" category. Pineapple juice, however, remained in short supply everywhere, while supplies of tomato juice remained generally adequate.

Canned vegetables: During early January canned corn supplies were larger in relation to current demand than in previous months. To a lesser extent the same was true of snap beans and peas, and all three items generally were reported adequate. Tomatoes continued scarce in most sections of the country due to high demand in the face of a relatively small civilian pack resulting from the poor 1945 tomato crop and the use of substantial quantities of raw tomatoes for other tomato products.

Frozen foods: Frozen strawberries were reported at a much lower level than in early December and were scarce in almost all reporting areas. Frozen apricots and peaches were reported adequate in about one-third of the areas. The same was true of frozen lima beans, but snap beans, cut corn, peas, and spinach were reported adequate in more areas than in early December, the proportion ranging from 52 to 76 percent of all reporting areas, compared with 51 to 67 percent a month earlier. Only the West showed no improvement.

Dried foods: Considerable improvement was reported everywhere for dried prunes, supplies of which were adequate in almost two-thirds of the Nation's areas in early January as compared with less than two-fifths a month earlier. The change was most marked in the Southwest and West. A significant improvement was also registered for raisins; 46 percent of the areas were able to supply demand, compared with 28 percent in December. Dry beans were generally in better supply than at any time during the past 3 months. A material increase in supplies was indicated in the South, and a slight decrease in the Southwest. In no region was the demand fully met.

Fresh foods: Oranges were in adequate supply and the number of areas reporting either surplus or scarce supplies was insignificant. Irish potatoes were also plentiful, and the proportion of areas with excess supplies dropped from 16 to 10 percent during the past month. Only in the Midwest and West was there a significant number of areas reporting surplus. Cabbage continued in adequate supply with very even distribution all over the country.

Meats, Dairy Products, Fats, and Other Items

Meats: A seasonal decrease in cattle slaughter, coupled with an increase in noncivilian requirements for beef, caused a material rise in the number of reporting areas unable to meet demands for certain cuts of beef and veal. In the case of beef steaks, the proportion of all areas with adequate supplies stood at 48 percent in early January, as against 64 percent a month before. For beef roasts, the corresponding drop was from 65 to 54 percent, for hamburger, 76 to 65 percent. At the same time, lamb was seasonally more plentiful than in December and was reported adequate in three-fifths of all areas. Most fresh and salted pork cuts showed improved supply in early January as seasonally heavy hog slaughter continued, but demand was extremely heavy and only in the cases of pork loin chops and roasts and of salted fat cuts was the improvement marked. Not quite one-half of all areas was meeting the demand for pork loin and salted fat cuts. All other cuts were in overall short supply, with stocks of cured ham and shoulder and also bacon inadequate in almost all areas in the country. This was due apparently not only to heavy demand but also to the normal time lag in processing pork. Cold cuts, including bologna and salami, were reported generally adequate with surpluses indicated in a few areas. Stocks of canned meats were larger than in the 3 previous months, but still inadequate to meet consumer wants in over one-half of the reporting areas.

Fish: Fresh and frozen fish continued plentiful in two-thirds of the areas in early January. The three major canned items (salmon, tuna, and sardines) were at the same supply level as in recent months--scarce in almost all areas--because distribution is not yet normal despite the increased size of the civilian pack.

Dairy products: Supplies of butter continued to fall off in relation to demand. A preponderance of areas in all regions were not meeting the high civilian demand in early January. The same situation prevailed for cheeses. A significant decline in supplies of evaporated milk in the South caused the national percentage of adequately-stocked areas to drop from 90 to 83 percent during December.

Fats and oils: Margarine supplies in early January continued fairly adequate in the country as a whole, but were reported considerably scarce in the Northeast and West. In the former region the situation was in sharp contrast with a month ago, a change apparently the result of unsatisfied demand for butter. Lard was in better supply than in many months, but was still inadequate to meet consumer demand in 70 percent of all areas. Shortening and salad oils continued scarce in almost all areas. Nontoilet soaps were still in very tight supply; however, a slight improvement was indicated in supplies of washing powder in most regions.

Other items: The sugar supply situation remained relatively unchanged. As in recent months the Northeast was experiencing a general shortage due to its lack of proximity to available supplies, but despite the advent of the new ration period, stocks were reported adequate in relation to rationed demand in more areas in that region than in December. Supplies were slightly less adequate in the South and West than a month before.

Eggs were seasonally in larger supply than in previous months and apparently demand did not show a corresponding increase. However, an extensive shortage persisted in most parts of the South. Poultry continued in adequate supply with a slight decline in the number of areas reporting surplus or shortage.

Civilian rice supplies continued to improve, but the over-all supply was adequate to meet demand in only 56 percent of the reporting areas. This compares with 41 percent in early December and 26 percent in October. The greatest improvement was indicated in the Southwest and West where shortages existed in only about one-third of the areas compared with about three-fifths of the areas a month earlier.

PART II - NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SITUATION BY COMMODITIES

FOODS THAT ARE GENERALLY SCARCE (A) -- reported scarce by at least one-third of the areas in all five regions. National figures are based on the actual number of areas reporting, and are not averages of the regional percentages.

	Percent Reporting Scarce Supplies					
	U.S.	N.E.	M.W.	S.	S.W.	W.
Fruits and vegetables						
Canned fruit cocktail	84	86	86	100	83	60
Canned peaches	64	100	48	77	75	34
Canned pears	94	100	98	100	98	71
Canned pineapple	99	96	100	100	100	97
Canned pineapple juice	97	89	98	98	100	97
Canned tomatoes	65	82	52	65	68	74
Frozen apricots	67	82	63	69	62	68
Frozen peaches	64	85	58	61	67	59
Frozen strawberries	94	100	87	95	97	94
Frozen beans, lima	67	81	60	74	67	59
Raisins	54	78	45	53	42	63
Dry beans	70	85	64	72	73	63
Meats, dairy products, fats, and other items						
Pork: loin chops and roasts	53	64	41	65	53	50
ham and shoulder, fresh	69	75	60	72	75	71
ham and shoulder, cured	88	86	83	93	90	91
salted fat cuts	54	36	58	44	55	73
bacon	95	89	93	98	95	97
Canned salmon	97	96	97	100	100	91
Canned tuna	89	86	89	86	95	91
Canned sardines	89	86	91	88	93	89
Butter	84	96	68	93	90	85
Cheese (all types)	80	86	85	88	60	77
Lard	70	54	70	72	73	79
Shortening	95	96	98	68	93	100
Salad oils	97	93	98	95	98	97
Soap: bar laundry	99	96	100	100	100	100
Flakes & granules	96	96	98	95	98	91
Washing powder	91	93	91	93	90	89
Rice	44	57	47	48	35	37

FOODS THAT ARE GENERALLY ADEQUATE (B) -- reported in adequate or surplus supply by more than two-thirds of the areas in all five regions. Percentages starred include 10 percent or more "surplus" reports. National figures are based on the actual number of areas reporting, and are not averages of the regional percentages.

Percent Reporting Adequate or Surplus Supplies

	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>N.E.</u>	<u>M.W.</u>	<u>S.</u>	<u>S.W.</u>	<u>W.</u>
<u>Fruits and vegetables</u>						
Grapefruit juice	94	96	97	95	95*	83
Orange juice	93	93	94	93	93	90
Orange-grapefruit juice	91	93	92	86	93	93
Canned corn	87	86	100	79	83	80
Canned peas	96	96	100	95	95	91
Tomato juice	94	93	95	93	95	94
Oranges, fresh	100*	100	100	100	100	100
Potatoes, Irish	100*	100	100*	100	100	100*
Cabbage	99	96	100	100	98	100
<u>Meats</u>						
Cold cuts, bologna, etc.	95*	96*	97*	93	100*	91
Chicken	94	96*	97	88	90	97

FOODS THAT ARE UNBALANCED (U) -- reported adequate or surplus in more than two-thirds of the areas in one to four regions, scarce in other regions. National figures are based on the actual number of areas reporting, and are not averages of the regional percentages.

Percent Reporting Adequate or Surplus Supplies

	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>N.E.</u>	<u>M.W.</u>	<u>S.</u>	<u>S.W.</u>	<u>W.</u>
<u>Fruits and vegetables</u>						
Canned beans, green & wax	90	93	98	95	92	66
Frozen beans, snap	68	81	77	62	64	53
Frozen corn, cut	62	70	83	41	46	58
Frozen peas	69	70	80	49	67	71
Frozen spinach	76	89	85	62	67	74
Dried prunes	64	33	64	58	83	71
<u>Meats, dairy products, and fats</u>						
Beef: steaks	48	18	46	23	72	76
roasts	54	25	56	23	77	88
hamburger	65	61	58	40	80	94
Veal: steaks, chops, & roasts	49	29	58	16	72	62
Lamb: steaks, chops, & roasts	61	39	68	37	80	76
Canned meats	47	61	71	19	30	49
Fish, fresh & frozen	66	61	84	69	42	65
Evaporated milk	83	93	95	60	78	86
Margarine	62	39	73	77	83	21
<u>Miscellaneous</u>						
Sugar	79	32	93	71	85	94
Eggs, shell	71	75	95	37	80	62

PART III - LOCAL SITUATIONS

(Supplies are indicated as follows: A - Scarce; B - Adequate; C - Surplus; N - No Answer. Letters in parentheses after commodities refer to groups shown in Part II; (A)-Generally Scarce; (B) - Generally Adequate; (U) - Unbalanced.)

Product	:Balti-:Ros-	:Buf-:Hart-	:New :adel-:Port-	:Chi-:Port-	:De-	:Mil-:	:At-:	:Char-
	:more,	:ton,	:fal-:fard,	:York:phia,:land,	:cag-:land,	:troit:kee,:Nebr.:Louis::ta,	:ton,	:les-
	:Md.	:Mass.:N.Y.:Conn.:N.Y.:Pa.	:Me.	:Ill.:Ohio:	:Mich.:Wis.:Mo.	:Ga.	:S.C.	
	Fruit cocktail (A)	Peaches (A)	Pears (A)	Pineapple (A)	Grapefruit juice (B)	Orange juice (B)	Orange-grapefruit juice (B)	Pineapple juice (A)
	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	A
Product	Beans green & wax (U)	Corn (B)	Peas (B)	Tomatoes (A)	Tomato juice (B)	Frozen apricots (A)	peaches (A)	strawberries (A)
	B	B	B	A	B	A	B	A
	B	B	B	A	B	A	B	A
	B	B	B	A	B	A	B	A
	B	B	B	A	B	A	B	A
Product	Dried prunes (U)	Raisins (A)	Dry beans (A)	●ranges (B)	Potatoes, Irish (B)	Cabbage (B)		
	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	
	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	
	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	
	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	

Product	:Jack-:	:son-:	Louis-:	Mem-:	Mo-:	Nor-:	Fort-:	Hous-:	Or-:	Ange-:	Phoe-:	Port-:	Lake-:	Fran-:	Seat-	New-:	Los-:	:Salt-:	San-:
Fla.: Ky.	Beef: steak (U)	B	B	A	A	A	B	B	A	B	A	B	B	A	A	A	B	B	B
	roast (U)	B	B	A	A	A	B	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	A	A	B	B	B
	hamburger (U)	B	B	A	A	A	B	B	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	A	A	B	B
	Veal: steaks, chops & roasts (U)	B	B	A	A	B	B	B	A	B	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Lamb: steaks, chops & roasts (U)	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Pork: loin, chops & roasts (A)	B	B	B	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
	ham & shoulder, fresh (A)	B	B	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	ham & shoulder, cured (A)	B	B	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	salted fat cuts (A)	B	B	B	B	A	B	A	A	B	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	bacon (A)	A	A	B	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Cold cuts, bologna (B)	B	A	B	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Canned meats (U)	A	B	B	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Fish, fresh & frozen (U)	B	B	A	A	A	B	A	A	B	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Canned: salmon (A)	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	B	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	tuna (A)	A	A	B	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	sardines (A)	A	A	B	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
1	Butter (A)	A	A	B	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Cheese (all types) (A)	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Evaporated milk (U)	B	B	B	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Margarine (U)	B	B	A	A	A	B	A	A	B	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Lard (A)	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	B	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Shortening (A)	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	B	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Salad oils (A)	A	A	A	A	B	B	A	A	B	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Bar laundry soaps (A)	A	A	B	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Flakes & granules (A)	A	A	B	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Washing powder (A)	A	A	B	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Sugar (U)	B	B	B	C	B	B	C	B	B	C	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Eggs, shell (U)	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Chicken (B)	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
	Rice (A)	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	B	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B

